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JAMES EARL CARTER JR.
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FORMER U.S. PREZ AND HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE JIMMY CARTER DIES AT 100

Democrat Jimmy Carter, who served as the 39th president of the United States between 1977 and 1981, died in Georgia on Monday at the age of 100

WINNER OF 2002 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

During his single term at the White House, Carter's initiatives led to the 1978 Camp David Accords, which ended hostilities between Israel and Egypt. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002. Human rights was a fulcrum of his foreign policy decisions. Condoling the death, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called Carter "a statesman of great vision" | **P14**

A VILLAGE IN HARYANA IS NAMED AFTER HIM

- In 1978, he visited India, becoming the third US president to do so. He travelled to a village in Haryana, where he left a lasting impression on its residents. They later renamed their village 'Carterpuri'
- The 1979 Iran hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan tarnished his reputation. He lost the subsequent re-election bid

43 years
SINCE HE LEFT THE WHITE HOUSE, MAKING HIS THE LONGEST U.S. POST-PRESIDENCY

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Honouring Gen Zorawar would have had more locational relevance

Shivaji statue on Pangong Tso triggers debate

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

A statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji on the banks of Pangong Tso in Eastern Ladakh, inaugurated by the Indian Army unit there a few days ago, triggered a lively debate on social media on its locational relevance.

The Leh-based Fire and Fury Corps proudly posted on X that the statue of Shivaji was inaugurated on December 26 at an altitude of 14,300 ft, before it ran into a verbal crossfire.

While some veterans applauded it, others suggested that honouring the memory of Dogra General Zorawar Singh (1784-1841) instead with a statue there would have been more appropriate, as he was an ace in mountain warfare and had annexed Ladakh and parts of Tibet.

It was at Finger 4 on the North Bank of the Pangong Tso lake where Indian soldiers and Chinese PLA troops got into a scuffle in May 2020. Bilateral relations went south before they were recently restored.

Chushul councillor Konchok Stanzin said, "As a local resident, I must voice my concerns about the Shivaji statue at Pangong. It was erected without local input and I question its relevance to our unique environment and wildlife."

Political activist Sajjad Kargili echoed Stanzin, adding: "These should not be placed in environmentally sensitive areas like Pangong, which require careful preservation".

Brigadier Hardeep Singh Sohi (Retd), defended the gesture, saying it was meant to boost morale of the troops. "In infantry units where the hand-to-hand combat chances are more, heroes associated with the Units are given a high pedestal by Cdrs (Commanders) to boost morale of troops. Statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji by a Maratha unit on banks of Pangong Tso lake is a step in that direction."

But Maj Gen B S Dhanoa (Retd) and Col Sanjay Pande (Retd) questioned the move. "There are the statutes (or laws) of war, but of late our armed forces are studying the "statues of war"...," he wrote on Maj Gen Birender Dhanoa (Retd) quipped on X.

Col Sanjay Pande (Retd) said Zorawar Singh died fighting in Tibet. The Leh Fort is called Zorawar Fort. "Zorawar Singh fought wars 180 years back, weather was as found today. He deserves to be there."

The statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji inaugurated on the banks of Pangong Tso in Ladakh on December 26

MARATHA REGIMENT RAISED THE STATUE

Army sources said a Rashtriya Rifles unit comprising troops of the Maratha Regiment "got the statue raised within its area of responsibility with resources voluntarily collected from serving and retired personnel."

NO HISTORICAL OR CULTURAL RELEVANCE

Political activist Sajjad Kargili said there is no cultural or historical relevance of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in Ladakh. "While we respect his legacy, imposing such cultural symbols here is misplaced."

CID will probe contractor suicide case: Dr G

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

Order CBI probe by Jan 3, or will stage protest: BJP

Bengaluru: Opposition BJP reiterated its demand CBI probe into contractor Sachin Panchala's death by suicide. BJP state president BY Vijayendra said if the CM fails to order a CBI probe by January 3, the party will stage a massive protest in Kalaburagi on January 4. | **P2**

THE state government has ordered a probe by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) into suicide by Bidar-based contractor Sachin Panchala, who had allegedly blamed an associate of RDPR Minister Priyank Kharge for his death in a note.

Revealing this to reporters here on Monday, Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara said that it is not right to make unnecessary allegations against Priyank. Officials have stated that the note did not have Priyank's name. "But BJP leaders are alleging that the note has Priyank's name. In order to reveal the truth, the case has been handed over to CID. Let's wait for the probe report," he said.

There is no need for Priyank to resign. All such cases cannot be handed over to the CBI. "Our CID is competent enough to investigate the case and bring out the truth," the home minister said.

The CID has investigated many cases. "If BJP leaders give any constructive suggestions or directions, we will consider them. But they are politicising the issue," he said.

Meanwhile, BJP leaders have criticised Parameshwara for taking a stand on the case even before completion of the probe. "Instead of standing with Panchala's family, Parameshwara is supporting Priyank," they said.

Panchala, who ended his life on Thursday, stated in his death note that he was pressured by Congress leader and former councillor Raju Kapanoor, who is said to be Priyank's associate, to pay Rs 1 crore. With BJP leaders' cry for Priyank's resignation getting louder, the RDPR minister met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday evening and briefed him about the contractor's suicide. Priyank also wrote to the CM and the home minister, urging them to hand over the case to an independent agency for investigation.

BJP, Cong spar over Rahul's trip to Vietnam during national mourning

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

THE row over former prime minister Manmohan Singh's funeral refuses to die down with the BJP targeting the Congress over its leadership's absence during the immersion of Singh's ashes and Rahul Gandhi's Vietnam trip during the mourning period.

In its pushback, the Congress said its leaders skipped the ceremony to give privacy to Singh's family. In a statement, Congress leader Pawan Khera said after the cremation, Sonia and Priyanka Gandhi met Singh's family at their residence. "It was felt that since the family did not get any privacy at the time of the cremation and some extended family members could not reach the pyre site, it would be appropriate to give them some privacy for the *Phool Chunana* and the immersion of ashes, which is an emotionally painful and difficult ceremony for close family members," Khera said.

Raking up Rahul's foreign trip, BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said in an X post: "The country is in mourning. The government has announced seven days of national mourning. As expected from Rahul Gandhi... he has left for tourism and to party."

Countering this, Congress MP B Manickam Tagore said Rahul is on a private visit. He termed the BJP's allegations as 'diversionary politics'.

Tariq Anwar, another Congress MP, said the trip was preplanned and that Rahul left after paying tributes to Singh.

Earlier, a war of words broke out between the Congress and the BJP over the venue and arrangements for Singh's last rites. The Congress alleged that the BJP insulted Singh by arranging the cremation at Nigambodh Ghat.

State RTCs have sought 15% fare hike: Ramalinga

AKNISREE KARTHIK @ Bengaluru

TRANSPORT Minister Ramalinga Reddy on Monday said that the four state bus corporations have sought a fare hike of 15 per cent. Reddy told TNIE that the corporations sent a proposal in this regard to the state government almost six months ago. The government will hold a discussion on the proposal and take a decision.

Meanwhile, officials from Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC), and North-West Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) stressed the need for a fare revision at the earliest to balance losses incurred by the corporations.

Members of RTC unions had threatened to go on an indefinite strike from December 31 seeking release of their pending salaries. The fund crunch in the four corporations is one of the reasons for accumulation of salary arrears, the officials said. **P5**

2-1
Australia are up 2-1 in five-Test series

30
No. of wickets Bumrah took in this series

ICC: BUMRAH HIGH

Jasprit Bumrah was nominated for ICC Test Cricketer of Year award along with England's Joe Root. Bumrah picked 71 wkts — highest in the world — from 13 Test matches at 14.92 avg

Australia team celebrates a wicket against India on Monday | AP

India lose Melbourne identity to Aussies

GOMESH S @ Melbourne

AS Rohit Sharma sat on the dais for the fifth time this year to address the media after a Test match defeat, there was a sense of unease. The usual Rohit charisma was missing. The wit and humour and those frank admissions have deserted the room. Once again he was there to discuss another loss.

The gloom before the New Year's Eve night is not something the India team would have wanted. Yet, it was, after Australia beat them here on Monday. More than the loss, the way India capitulated is something the team management should ponder about. India had lost their last seven wickets for just 34 runs in 20.4 overs and what looked like a well-deserved draw, ended in a loss. As the bandwagon shifts to Sydney, India trail Australia 1-2 with one last Test to play for.

The press conference reflected Rohit's sombre mood. He was struggling, like his form and innings, to find the apt words. With guns training at his batting and leadership, there is little Rohit can do. In the five innings he played in Australia, he scored only 31 runs at an average of 6.2, considered dismal by his standard. By the look of Rohit, there seemed to be something ominous brewing within.

With India needing him and the other senior player Virat Kohli most to salvage a draw, both perished in the most pitiable fashion. They had been the anti-thesis to the mercurial Jasprit Bumrah, who once again finished with a five-wicket haul. Such had been the dependency on his bowling, he had bowled almost one-third of overs sent down by India in the second innings. Kohli once again showed his vulnerability outside off and when he fell India were staring down the barrel.

If not for young Yashasvi Jaiswal (84) and Rishabh Pant partnership of 88, India would have folded up their innings well before the last session. "There are things that we as a team need to look at," Sharma said. "I personally need to look at as well. So we will try and see what happens." He said Sydney is still there. "If we can play that game well, with 2-2, a draw will be really nice." **P17**

> It is mentally disturbing when you can't do what you have come to do. It is pretty disappointing. There are ways to win games and we fell short in finding ways to win the game here — Rohit Sharma

ISRO sets SpaDex sats off on historic journey; may dock by January 7

S V KRISHNA CHAITANYA @ Sriharikota

IN a rare nighttime launch, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) workhorse PSLV-C60 vehicle on Monday successfully launched the two SpaDex (Space Docking Experiment) satellites in their intended orbit. In about a week's time, for the first time, the space agency will attempt to join the satellites together in space and demonstrate transfer of electrical power transmission. This is deemed to be one of the most complex space missions undertaken till date by ISRO.

Once accomplished, it will place India in an elite league of spacefaring nations. The ability of two indigenous satellites to autonomously rendezvous, dock and undock in orbit, a complex and high-stakes operation, has been mastered by only a handful of nations, including Russia, US and China.

The SpaDex mission involves two small satellites,

ISRO's PSLV-C60 during lift off at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh | PTI

designated SDX01 and SDX02, each weighing approximately 220kg. These satellites have been equipped with state-of-the-art technology, including ISRO's patented androgynous docking mechanism, which allows either satellite to serve as the active 'chaser' or the passive 'target.'

ISRO Chairman S Somanath said, "The rocket has placed SpaDex satellites in the right orbit. We expect the docking to take place around January 7."

EXPRESS READ

K'taka govt to challenge Darshan bail in SC

Bengaluru: The state government will file a Special Leave Petition (SLP) before the Supreme Court, challenging the bail granted to Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, Pavithra Gowda, and others in the Renukaswamy murder case. **P3**

'Pvt banks write off loans to make books look good'

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has warned private sector banks against writing off loans to make their books look good. RBI's concern comes in the backdrop of data showing improvement in GNPA ratios, which fell to a decadal low in 2024-25. RBI has also flagged concerns over dilution in underwriting standards. **P12**

TRUMP SEXUAL ASSAULT VERDICT UPHELD

The 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals on Monday upheld a Manhattan trial court's verdict that former US president Donald Trump sexually abused columnist E Jean Carroll in the mid-1990s, dismissing his appeal | **P14**

JEANS EDITING

Carlsen says Anand, for all his good qualities, isn't ready for FIDE job

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

THE Magnus Carlsen saga has taken new twist. A couple of days after being disqualified from the World Rapid Chess championships in New York for wearing jeans, the former world champion took a dig at Indian chess legend Viswanathan Anand, who is a deputy president in the international chess federation (FIDE).

While speaking to an online app, Carlsen said the disqualification was 'draconian' and criticised the FIDE for mishandling the issue. He even said that there was no grown-ups to discuss with in FIDE and called the officials "robots" unable to make independent decisions.

"Well... let's go back to a couple of days ago. I did have some choice words for FIDE in my interview with you. And I would say that it was a bit imprecise. I definitely mean it when it comes to certain people in FIDE. No question about it," he told an app, adding he almost booked his flight back home. The Norwegian is participating in World Blitz after FIDE chief Arkady Dvorkovich intervened.

"We had long conversations with Anand yesterday and others, which generally didn't lead anywhere. It was generally the same answers that arbiters are basically robots who cannot think on their own, who have no way to even deviate slightly from... I don't even know if I broke any rules. I still haven't gotten a clear answer on that," Carlsen said.

Anand told Chessbase India that Carlsen was penalised for breaking rules. For his part, Carlsen said he did not break any rules and at least he has not got a favourable reply from FIDE. "Anand said very clearly that he didn't know that he had any opportunity to do anything past, you know, go with the arbiters' honestly draconian decision of not pairing me. And that means that he was, for all his good qualities, not ready for this job. That's what I feel," Carlsen said. The FIDE also tweaked the dress code that said "elegant minor deviations (that may, in particular, include appropriate jeans matching the jacket) are allowed."